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had not acted well toward the Granman. It would be best if we did not stop there. At the others the Granman could assure us hospitality. Then there was talk of hauling wood and making rafts, for our host, who knew these people well, moved safri, too, until he at last felt the moment had come to talk about buying a boat from Ajako.

When the arrangements of the sale were concluded, Ajako came back to talk with us. He had heard that we had a machine which the Kromanti spirit had broken, was it true? Did it really go again? They said the Bakra had much cunning. They said the Bakra knew African magic.

The Bakra said he knew something about Africa. The Ashanti people, for instance, were a fine people.

"*Ma na Asante, na Sa'macca sem-* . . . —But the Ashanti are Saramacca. . . . " But he would go no further, having spoken only one syllable of the word for people. He became guarded. Yes, there were some Anago people from Africa on this Saramacca River, and Dahomey, and Loango, and Fanti; the Ibo peoples were not on this river. . . . And again he would say no more. Later, when we had changed the subject, he said as if in both gratitude and explanation, "*Na sa-i-'akisi, a tranga poi*—You ask about strong things."

But he would sing into our machine, if we liked. He would sing Kromanti, if we wanted him to do so. "I won't fight your machine," he said, smiling.

"*Anabobi, Anabobi,*
Anabobi, Anabobyo,
Tata Ando.
Anabobi, Ando,
Anabobi,
Tata Adjaini,
Anabobyo
Tata Fa'aku."

"They will understand this in Africa," he said, gravely, and then he moved toward the doorway and stood there

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rapids and large rapids. He carries loads and returns to his own village. But then something happens. His boat is good. He walks *koni*—carefully—but he loses his food, or his entire load, or his boat, or even his life. Something is working against him. It might be *wisi*—bad magic; it might be kunu. If you have kunu, then your enemies can make their bad magic work against you. So it is."

"But what is kunu, Bayo?"

He hesitated.

We assured him that there was no harm in our asking. We had been hearing so much about it, first about Zimbi, and how he had died from a cut with his machete. Now this machete had worked for him since he was a boy, and then he cut himself, and then, having cut himself, he became sick and died. People said down below this was kunu. What did it mean?

But he still hesitated and looked about him until at last when he spoke, he gave the answer we were coming to know so well—"*Massa Gadu sabi*—God knows"—that answer that was the signal that not alone Massa Gadu, but the one who invoked his name in protection against Bakra questions, knew the answer quite well but meant to keep his own counsel. For to talk of these matters is not good, we had been told before by Sedefo.

It was Bibifo who brought up kunu again when Bayo stepped out of the boat for an instant.

"Better not talk to Bayo about kunu, Bakra. There is a very big kunu in Bayo's family. He does not mean to lie to the Bakra when he doesn't talk, but it is better for him not to tell you about it. We Saramacca people say: 'A snake bit me. I see a worm, I am afraid.' Do not ask him more."

2

But the Bush Negro has many sayings, and it was a different proverb from that which Bibifo had quoted to us that guided us in our tortuous course in search of an understanding of kunu.

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KUNU

"*Na wa' taki: Efi gbuli wolo, i sa si san de na ini.*—It is said: If a person stirs up a hole, he will find what is in it." 538

And so it was that very night, when we were camped on an island near the great falls, with the roar of the water sounding in our ears like the very signal drums we were told the river gods wanted sounded that the sun might come and warm and dry them after the long rains, that we learned more. Kasanya, the captain of the fourth boat, had conducted himself so unobtrusively that we barely knew he was there. He was almost as old as Bibifo, but strangely silent. He was tall and spare, with graying hair, and eyes that were rimmed with red. We had not sought him out particularly to make conversation with him because he had ugly, open sores on his body, the result of a virulent case of bush yaws, which showed when he sat paddling in his loin cloth. We had known him during our first year when he had been more willing to be friendly, more ready to talk. From him, in fact, we had learned to play one of the Bush Negro games that the ancestors had brought from Africa. 124 ● [177] [524]

Kasanya came over to ask us whether we had medicine for him. His head ached so until . . . he could barely see. There is that about white man's medicine in the bush, it is to be had free, and there is no harm in trying it. 123 609

"Will you make us a game board like the one we bought from your village last year, Kasanya?" we asked him.

"Yes, but you must have two of them, one flat and one curved like a boat. It is not good to have only one. When a man is alive he plays the game. When he dies and comes back to visit the living, he wants to play, too. Now if there is a board for him, he will play on that. But if there is but the one, he will play with the living and that is not good." 775 524

"You know a great deal, Kasanya."

"Awa, yes, but I'm an old man already. I've had much trouble. Last year after you left the third son I made died. Now I have no one. Kunu has taken the three of them, and my wife is asleep, too." [776]

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and so close that our hands, moving about to find a rest, touched its top, and sounded an involuntary rhythm, was an apinti drum. We exclaimed at its beauty, for in form and carving it rivaled the one we had admired in the council house of Granman Yankuso, and we were determined to try to buy it. But we turned our conversation to other things. A stranger in this bush soon learns from the Bush Negroes to broach an important request gently, remembering the cautioning proverb spoken by the chameleon.

We talked of carving, of the white man's coming back some year when the rains were heavy to sit by and watch the men make paddles and benches, so that he might learn, as children learn.

The captain was politely skeptical. It took a Saramacca hand to do this work. But he smiled, "Ma kye, if you have the gods anything is possible."

"That's a fine paddle in the corner."

He brought it out, and we admired it. Would he sell it to us?

"You must ask its owner."

"Didn't you make it, captain?"

"Yes, but it is not mine to sell. I gave it to my wife." He would see, however, if she wanted to sell it. He would himself go and call her.

As he went, he gave us the paddle that we might examine it. We ran our hands over the smooth top, the design, the beveled blade. It was not so tall as the paddles used by the men, nor was its blade so broad as those used in steering the great boats through the rapids. In form, it was quite different from the round-bladed type used by the Indians of the region, for it was slender and came to a sharp point, and at the other end the carving formed a crutch-shaped hold into which the hand fitted.

We studied this carving. Parts of the design had meaning for us because of their realistic treatment. The motifs of others were recognizable to us from explanations we had been given of other carvings. But there were still details

/23 cont./

621 175 [66] [103] Agodé was founded by Grand Man Ochi, probably about 1895, at the time when the Boni were required by the settlement of the Lawa Dispute to evacuate the villages they were occupying on the Surinam bank. The name Boniville was given by the gold miners; it was used never at all by the Boni.

621 613 [103] The Yakubi or Kotika lineage forms the important village of Kotika (1). It is one of those which have remained best grouped.

1. This word alludes to the river where the rebellion of 1772 began.

[423] [241] [103] Its members have exclusive rights over the region included between Abunasunga Falls and their village. They have farmed there for more than a century, and this is why the region is called Abattis Kotika.

613 621 175 [648] Kotika is the oldest Boni village. It is one of those founded by the survivors of the battles against the Dutch when, about 1815, they settled again on the Lawa. Until about 1895 nearly all the Boni were grouped in one large village, each lineage occupying a different quarter. At the time of the settlement, unfavorable to France, of the Lawa Dispute (1895), the various lineages emigrated, founding especially the villages of l'Enfant Perdu, Loka, Boniville, and Papaïston. Only the members of the Kotika lineage stayed, in full agreement with the grand man, so that the ancestral land might not be completely abandoned. [648] [628] Thus the inhabitants of this village are nowadays under the authority of Surinam, without ceasing, for that reason, to be faithful to the grand man and maintaining normal relations with the other groups.

613 614 [124] The genealogies reconstituted in 1957 by systematic interrogation of the old people of the group had led to three distinct fractions which we shall call Kotika 1, 2, and 3, tracing respectively back to ancestresses named Kénéya, Amawi, and Oka.

/155 cont./

586 [163] Likewise Pééchina, about 70 years old in 1957, separated from Nachinengé (Kotika) after having spent the greatest part of her life with him and having six children by him.

In order to be able to break thus a long standing union without undergoing moral collapse, it is certainly necessary for the affectivity of each one to be entirely centered on his maternal family.

586 124 Frequency of divorce. This essential aspect of the social life of the Refugee Blacks is not easy to lay hold on by direct interrogation. The women do not willingly talk about their past unions and let go in silence the ones which remained childless. However, we were able to reconstitute with rather 586 128 great certainty the past life of about a hundred women (mothers, near relatives, or wives of our most reliable informants). These men /"women" -- printing error. -- Tr./ are marked with a double asterisk ** in the population list of the villages.

[178] It is useful to classify them by age groups relating to the year of birth, for we shall see that the frequency of divorce seems to have increased with time. The groups chosen are the same as for the demographic investigation which we carried on parallel to the sociological study:

538 /267 cont./
[765] audience and to create an atmosphere of participation in the rite.

This ritual character makes it so that the Anansi Toli cannot be recited any time and in any old way. The story-teller may speak only at night, in the presence of a respondent and of an audience of at least two or three persons. A ritual formula: "dirinti" -- the response of the audience: "ndaeti," precedes each new story. It is only with extreme repugnance [124] [126] [76] that informants consent to listen to and comment in the daytime on a tale recorded on tape, particularly if their parents are still living, for it is said among the Refugee Blacks as in Black Africa that telling stories in full daylight makes one's father and mother die.

[174] [177] These tales belong to an authentically African accumulated store, practically unchanged in spite of the borrowing from the Creole Blacks of Paramaribo of several themes concerning automobiles, steamboats, etc., inserted in droll fashion into the traditional themes.

The usual hero of these tales is Anansi, the crafty one. [825] Anansi is the name of the Mygale spider (1). It is noteworthy,

[191]

1. The spider cycle is characteristic of the Akan (Agni-Baoulé-Abron) culture area. Anansi is the name of the Mygale spider among the Agni.

however, that this spider does not appear to play any special role in the beliefs of the Refugee Blacks and that no divinatory power is attributed to it. In fact, in the tales of which he is the hero, Anansi is nearly always represented as a man.